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Divinity.
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From the London Methodist Magazine.

A SERMON

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN FLETCHER, VICAR OF MADELY ;

Supposed to have been preached soon after he entered the ministry.

Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,
JOHN III. 3.*

THE corruption that has overspread the Christian world as a flood, and the lukewarmness of those who distinguish themselves by some degree of seriousness, make it next to impossible to preach many of the most important doctrines of Christianity, without giving offence to some. We love to lie down as if our spiritual race was run, even before we set out in earnest. And if any one attempts to shew us plainly our danger in so doing, we look upon him in general as a troublesome person, who endeavours to make us uneasy without necessity. This is one of the reasons why those who are appointed to shew unto others the way of salvation, dare hardly mention what Christ said of the narrowness of the way that leads to life, and the few that walk therein.

We fear to be thought uncharitable, or suspected of preaching new doctrines : and this fear makes us soften, if not conceal, those parts of the gospel which Christ and his apostles insisted upon in the plainest terms.

Nevertheless, as we are commanded to declare the whole counsel of God, without respect of persons, or fear of men, I shall now discourse on one of those points of doctrine which worldly Christians seldom make the subject of their medita-

* Although the subject of this Discourse is nearly the same with that of the Sermon published in our two last Numbers, the reader will perceive they are two entirely different sermons.

tions: I mean, the doctrine of our *regeneration*, or *new birth* in Christ Jesus. And to do it in order, I shall consider,

First, On what occasion, and to whom our blessed Lord, spoke the words of the text, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." In the

Second place. I shall shew the absolute necessity of a new birth to enter into life eternal. And,

Thirdly, I shall conclude by pointing out the way to that regeneration, without which no man can see the kingdom of heaven. And may the Lord, who has promised to be with his servants to the end of the world, manifest his presence among us, and apply by his Spirit to all our hearts the important doctrine of the text which he taught himself in the days of his flesh.

And first, I am to consider on what occasion, and to whom our blessed Lord spoke of regeneration.

1. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, and no doubt one of the best of them, having heard of the miracles of Jesus, concluded that he was no mere man, but a teacher sent from God: therefore he came by night to ask him some questions concerning the kingdom of God, which every sincere Jew expected at that time. Our Lord, knowing that he (as well as the rest of the nation) entertained wrong notions of his kingdom, which is wholly spiritual, began by assuring him that no one unconverted could see that kingdom:—much less enter into it—"Verily, verily I say unto thee, that, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

2. As if he had said, Be not mistaken, Nicodemus, my kingdom is not such as thou thinkest, nor can all men enter therein, since thou art yet unprepared for it thyself. Neither thy honesty, nor sobriety, nor all thy zeal for the religion of thy fathers, with thy great profession of all the external duties of it, can fit thee for the presence of God. If thou retest there, know that thy soul will remain in as thick darkness as that which surrounds a child yet unborn. For though thou enjoyest an animal life, as other creatures on earth, yet hast thou lost in Adam a spiritual life; the life of angels in thy soul; and thou must receive it again by a new and spiritual birth; or else thou shalt be as little capable of seeing and enjoying God, as a child unborn is to see and enjoy the light of the sun.

3. Though this doctrine of the new birth surprises every natural man, and seems foolishness to him, our blessed Lord did not first deliver it: Moses had said two thousand years before him, "The Lord your God shall *circumcise*," or so change "*your heart*, that you shall be enabled to love him with all your soul. The Lord will take away your heart of stone, and give you an heart of flesh." David had prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." Ezekiel had

cried aloud to all the people of God, "Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make yourselves new hearts and new spirits, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" As if he had said, "In vain do you boast of being the house of Israel, and God's chosen people; unless you get new hearts and new spirits, you shall surely die."

4. These, and many more passages of the Old Testament, should make us think that no sincere Jew could be a stranger to the doctrine of the new birth. But as there are now many serious people who have a great form of religion, and notwithstanding know nothing of regeneration experimentally, supposing themselves to be of those just men who need no repentance, and consequently no spiritual change; so it was in the days of our Lord; and Nicodemus with all his profession of religion, zeal, morality, and desire of being instructed, was one of the number.

5. Accordingly, struck with amazement at the saying of our Lord, and mistaking quite the meaning of his words, "How can a man be born?" (cried he) "when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Our Lord told him, if a man could enter into his mother's womb and be born again, that would not help him, for he would still be sinful flesh, and of the same corrupted nature as that from which he was born. But to enter into his kingdom, which is spiritual, he must be born of water and of the Holy Ghost, he must have a spiritual birth, be begotten of incorruptible seed, and become an adopted son of God.

6. Then, to prevent all doubts of the absolute necessity of submitting to this doctrine, as if it were not enough to have affirmed it necessary twice, and to have enforced it by the solemn word *indeed, indeed*; lest any one, like Nicodemus, should question the truth of it, because he never experienced it, our Saviour added for the *third* time, (turning himself, no doubt, to all that were present) *Ye must be born again*. As if he had said, "What I say to Nicodemus, I say unto all, Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

7. Here the Jewish ruler, not daring to object any more to the truth of our Lord's doctrine, only expressed his wonder at hearing it. Our Lord, who (if we are sincere before him) always removes rather than punishes our stupidity in the things of God, would not discourage him; but, with an admirable patience endeavoured to make him understand the impossibility of explaining by what operation of God's grace a man is born again.

8. How short, and yet how powerful was his argument! "When the wind bloweth," saith he, "thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." As if he had said, "How can one describe the

wind to him who has not felt or heard it? or how account whence it cometh? yet we know and feel there is such a thing as wind. So one that is born again, into whose soul the Lord has breathed the breath of spiritual life, knows that the Holy Ghost has dispelled the darkness of his soul, and made him pass from death unto life; he feels in his heart the happy change; he experiences that he is a child of God, because God has given him of his Spirit, and refreshes him with the spiritual breezes of his consolations. Though he is conscious of all this, yet he cannot reveal or describe it to another; nor can he make one whose eyes the Lord has not yet opened, see the kingdom and taste the happiness to which he is restored, because it is what no man knows but he that receiveth it: here every one must experience for himself."

9. This plain answer should have satisfied Nicodemus, but unbelief made him cry out again, "How can these things be?" Then did our Lord silence him. "What. (said he,) art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? If I have told you of earthly things," of the wind which is earthly, and you are not able to comprehend or account for its blowing, how can you pretend to understand spiritual and heavenly things, which are past finding out. Thus did our Lord reprove the ignorance and incredulity of that master in Israel, who had not learned himself what he should have taught others long before: and at the same time gave him and us to understand that this mystery of the new birth is not to be defined or described, but felt, experienced, and enjoyed in the heart; and that every one who believes the word of God to be true, instead of inquiring, *How can this be?* must immediately beg of God to make him feel in his heart the want of a new birth; and then he will receive power to seek it with tears, prayer, and repentance, till he find it for himself. This was the case of Nicodemus: for notwithstanding the unwillingness he shewed at first to believe the doctrine of regeneration true, he was convinced by the words of our Lord: and we hear that he proved at last a bold confessor of Christ and his doctrine. Would to God we were as ready to imitate him in his faith as worldly Christians are ready to imitate his crying out, *How can it be?*

10. Having thus explained how and to whom our Saviour preached regeneration, I proceed now to shew the absolute necessity of a new birth. And in order to this, it seems that, in addressing Christians, it should be sufficient to say, that Christ has solemnly declared it necessary; for besides what he said to Nicodemus, he told his disciples that "unless they were converted, and became as little children, they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven,"—which was enforced after his death by the Apostles, when they said, "Put on the new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness—and be

ye renewed in the spirit of your minds ; for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." And to add the last degree of evidence to these Scripture proofs, I could bring in the testimony of our Church, which declares in her Catechism, "A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness necessary to salvation," and is so far from supposing, (as some would have it,) that we are all born again in baptism, that she directs us in her Collects to pray that God by "his Holy Spirit would create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we may obtain perfect remission of our sins." Whence it appears clearly, that she exhorts every baptized person to seek this renewal of the heart, and that no one can be a faithful member of Christ and the Church of England, who does not receive the doctrine of regeneration.

(To be concluded in the next.)

Biography.

For the Methodist Magazine.

MEMOIR OF REV. SAMUEL PARKER.

SAMUEL PARKER was a native of the state of New-Jersey, and born about the year 1774. His parents were pious and respectable. He was put to a trade young, and became a proficient in his business. At the age of fourteen, he was awakened under the preaching of the gospel ; and soon after, forsaking the scenes of gay and fashionable dissipation, in which, owing to the suavity of his manners, the gentleness of his disposition, and his uncommonly fine voice in singing, he was a great favourite, he attached himself to the Methodist Society, then very generally held in contempt by the world. He became eminent for his devotion to God, and to the cause of piety. He continued to occupy a private station in the church for twelve years ; not, however, without being often warned that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him, and that he must expect the Divine displeasure if he persisted in burying the talent entrusted to him for improvement. But such was his unaffected modesty, that it was long ere he could be prevailed upon to take upon himself the character of an ambassador for Christ.

At length, in the year 1800, he received license as a local preacher, in the Methodist Episcopal Church ; and continued to sustain that relation, with usefulness, till the Conference of 1805, when, giving himself up to the work of the ministry, he became a travelling preacher. He was that year appointed to

Hinkstone circuit—1806 Lexington circuit—1807 Limestone circuit—1808 Miami circuit. At the Conference for 1809, he graduated to Elder's orders, having stood his probation and used the office of a Deacon well, and was, the same year, appointed to preside in the Indiana district, at that time one of the most difficult and important stations in the Conference. Here he continued four years; and so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, that it was found necessary to divide the district, and call more labourers to cultivate the extensive field that had been opened under his superintendence. Thus abundantly did he justify the confidence reposed in him, by the Superintendents. 1813 he rode the Deer-Creek circuit, and was blessed in his labours, and honoured by those to whom he ministered—1814 he was appointed presiding elder in the Miami district—1815 presiding elder in the Kentucky district; where he continued four years, blessing and being blessed in all his intercourse with mankind. During his presidency on this district, he was married to Oletha Tilton, who enjoyed his society long enough to be sensible, that there is no affliction incident to suffering humanity so exquisite as the loss of a companion, who united all the endearing qualities which nature and grace can combine in the character of a husband.

A situation of the greatest importance, in the Mississippi Conference, required to be provided for. The Superintendent felt the utmost solicitude on the subject. He saw in Brother Parker whatever he wished in the person to be selected: but there were great difficulties to be surmounted, and great privations to be endured. His health was very delicate: his wife must be torn from her friends and a comfortable home, to wander among strangers: the distance was great, and the country very unfavourable to health. Yet, when the Bishop intimated the demands which the Church had to make upon his labours and sufferings, he was ready, in the true spirit of St. Paul, to say, "I count not my life dear unto me, that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received—I will go." He accordingly went. But, alas! the sanguine hopes of the Bishop, and of those in Mississippi who knew him, were rendered abortive by the state of his health. Nearly the only advantage resulting from his emigration to that country, was the lesson his example afforded, on the spirit and peace in which a Christian can suffer and die. He was in very ill health when he arrived at his place of destination, and continued gradually to decline, till some time in November, when his disease assumed so malignant a character, as to excite fearful apprehensions in his friends that they were soon to be deprived of him. At the time when the Conference met he was considered slightly amended, and hopes were entertained by some that he would

soon recover : but others, better acquainted with the disease and the influence of that climate, considered his case to be hopeless. Soon after the rising of the Conference, his disorder returned with more violence than ever. In all these changes, this servant of the Lord was able to say, without a repining sigh, "Father, not *mine*, but *thy* will be done !" Thus he lived, and thus he suffered many tedious months of severe affliction in a land of strangers :—and, thus, on the 20th of December, 1819, he breathed out his happy spirit, into the hands of that SAVIOUR and FRIEND whom he had so long and so faithfully served.

He left a wife and a son in the care of Him who has said, "Leave thy fatherless children, and let thy widow trust in *ME* ;" and God was faithful to the trust reposed in him by his servant. The son, an infant, he speedily snatched away from a world in which the tears of the orphan are too often disregarded : And, to the widow he raised up many friends, who were ready and willing at all times to administer to her relief and comfort.

His funeral sermon was preached on the Sunday after his death, at Washington, Mississippi, to a large and melting congregation, on Rev. xiv. 13, by William Winans, a young man whom he had contributed to bring into the ministry, and to foster, in the infancy of his labours, with the tenderness of a parent.

Of his character, nothing so proper, perhaps, could be said, as that he exemplified, in a very unusual degree, the description of charity, so inimitably drawn out in the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians. The loss sustained by his family is unspeakably great ; that of the church much greater. We can be no otherwise satisfied under this dispensation of Providence, than by reflecting that it is of him who doeth all things well. He who has bereaved his church of this highly valuable minister, has the means in his hands of abundantly supplying his lack of service. May He send down a double portion of the Spirit which rested on this our Elijah, upon many that He shall call to cultivate the vineyard, from which He has taken his servant to his eternal rest !

Scripture Illustrated.

From the London Methodist Magazine.

To the Editor of the Methodist Magazine.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE testimony of Sir William Jones to the authenticity of the Hebrew Scriptures appears to me to be worthy of the greatest publicity. I have taken it from the eight discourses which

he delivered before the Asiatic Society. If you think it calculated to serve the great cause of truth, its insertion in your very useful Magazine will oblige your's, &c.

Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 1820.

JOHN RABY.

“Theological inquiries (he remarks) are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts which we call from their excellence, *the Scriptures*, contain, independently of a Divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass, from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any nation. The two parts of which the Scriptures consist are connected by a chain of compositions which bear no resemblance, in form or style, to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Italian, Persian, or even Arabian learning. The antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unrestrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief, that they were genuine predictions, and consequently inspired.”

In answer to Y. Z. who thinks that verse 36th of the 7th chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, is frequently abused to the purposes of impurity; and who wishes to know whether it be properly translated, we observe, that the translation of the verse is sufficiently accurate, and the sense not obscure. It is, we think, as explained in the following paraphrase:—“*But if any man,—who is a parent or guardian, think that he behaveth himself uncomely—that he should act indecently, or in a manner unbecoming his character, or unsuitably to her credit or reputation, towards his virgin, by hindering her from marriage, if she pass, &c. Gr. εαν η υπερακμος, if she be above age, or of full age, and need so require, και ετως οφειλει γινεσθαι and it be necessary to be so done, whether the necessity ariseth from her conscience and inclination, or her being sought in marriage; let him do what he will—as he sees occasion, according to circumstances, either to give her in marriage or to keep her single. Or, as the words may be rendered, Let him do what she inclineth to; he sinneth not—in complying with her inclination in such a case. Let them, let such virgin daughters, marry. As both the Jews and Greeks reckoned celibacy dishonourable, some fathers might think it sinful to restrain their daughters from marriage; while others, following the opinions of the Essenes and rigid philosophers, fancied they acted properly in restraining them. The Corinthians, therefore, had judged it necessary to consult the apostle on that head.*”—See *Benson's Commentary*.

The Attributes of God Displayed.

From the London Methodist Magazine.

To the Editor of the Methodist Magazine.

DEAR SIR,

WHAT I now transmit, are specimens of the "Works of God, selected from the immense and the minute : from the most formidable animal, the most terrific reptile, and the little ant. How surprising is the scale of being, and how diversified the chain of existence ! How each, and all, subserve the great purposes of the Creator ! I have drawn these accounts from a celebrated work, in which extracts are inserted, and denominated, "Additions to Natural History."

I am, dear Sir, with profound respect, your's, very truly,

Kettering—1820.

W. B. BROWNE.

Hail, Sovereign Goodness ! all productive Mind !

On all thy works THYSELF inscrib'd we find,

How various all, how variously endow'd !

How great the number—and each part how good ! BLACKLOCK.

A REMARKABLE ACCOUNT OF A LION AND LIONESS IN THE CITY OF PARIS.

Citizen Felix brought a lion and lioness to the national menagerie in Paris. About two years after, Felix fell ill, and another person was employed to fill his place, in the care of these formidable animals. The lion, sad and solitary, remained from that moment, constantly seated at the end of his cage, and refused to receive any thing from the stranger ; his presence was even hateful to him, and he menaced him by roaring. The company of the female also seemed to displease this monarch of the woods. The uneasiness of the animal made him be thought really ill, but no person dared to approach him. At length Felix got well, and meaning to surprise the lion, he crept softly to the cage, and shewed only his face against the bars ; the lion directly made a bound towards him, patted him with his paws, licked his hands and face, and trembled with pleasure. The lioness ran to him also, but the "king of beasts" drove her back, seemed angry, and unwilling she should snatch any favours from Felix ; a quarrel seemed to take place between them, but Felix entered into the cage to pacify them ; he caressed them by turns. After that time Felix was frequently seen between the formidable couple, whose power he has fettered, holding a kind of conversation with them. If he wishes them to separate, they obey his commands, and at the least sign from him, lie down on their backs to shew strangers their paws armed with terrible claws, and open their mouths full of tremendous teeth ; and are rewarded by being permitted to lick his hands. These two animals were both of the same mother, and had always lived together.

A VERY EXTRAORDINARY ACCOUNT OF A PILE OF SERPENTS, IN
GUIANA, SOUTH-AMERICA.

"IN the savannahs of Izacubo, in Guiana, I saw the most wonderful, the most terrible spectacle that can be seen; and although it be not uncommon to the inhabitants, no traveller has ever mentioned it. We were ten men on horseback, two of whom took the lead, in order to sound the passages; whilst I preferred to skirt the great forests. One of the negroes, who formed the vanguard, returned full gallop, and called to me, 'Here, Sir, come see serpents in pile.' He pointed out to me something elevated in the middle of the savannah, or swamp, which appeared like a bundle of arms. One of my company then said, 'This is certainly one of the assemblages of serpents, which heap themselves on each other after a violent tempest; I have heard of these, but have never seen any; let us proceed cautiously, and not go too near.' We continued our way slowly; I fixed my eyes on the pyramid, which appeared immovable. When we were within ten or twelve paces of it, the terror of our horses prevented our nearer approach, to which, however, none of us were inclined. On a sudden, the pyramidal mass became agitated; horrible hissings issued from it, and thousands of serpents rolled spirally on each other, shot forth out of the circle their hideous heads, presenting their envenomed darts and fiery eyes to us. I own I was one of the first to draw back; but when I saw this formidable phalanx remained at its post, and appeared to be more disposed to defend itself than to attack us, I rode round it, in order to view its order of battle, which faced the enemy from every side. I then sought to find what could be the design of this numerous assemblage; and I concluded that this species of serpents dreaded some collossean enemy, which might be the great serpent,* or the caynean, and that they re-unite themselves, after having seen this enemy, in order to attack or resist him in mass. On this occasion, I shall hazard an opinion, which I found on several other observations; it is, that the animals in the New World are more advanced than the men in developing their instinct, and in the social combinations of which they are susceptible; the silence and the solitudes of the woods, leaving the greatest liberty to all their motions, the individuals of the same species easily meet; and those species which are the best organized feel, without doubt, that impulsion of a common interest which announces and pro-

* Some of these serpents are from thirty to forty feet in length, and four or five in circumference. I brought the stuffed skin of one of the species back to France, and gave it to the Museum—it was 21 feet long, and 13 inches in diameter. The caynean is of the oviparous species of crocodiles, the egg from which it proceeds is no larger than that of a goose, an animal grows to the enormous length as the above-named serpents.

vokes to the same end the concurrence of all their means; but after having acknowledged in animals different degrees of intelligence, such as memory, deliberation, will, we are reduced to mere conjecture as to their means of communication. It is certain, that those which possess the organs of voice, have their cries of alarm, of rallying, of love, and of anger; and may they not also have those requisite to combine their chases, to distribute the posts of attack and defence, the different labours for their common constructions, as well as for supplying their common habitations with necessities? Can we conceive that beavers cut down great trees, drag them to the river, form and plant piles, beat mortar, build their lodge without speaking to, and understanding each other? Wherever there are different parts, and a common or general direction, there is police and government. We are not yet acquainted with the legislative power of bees and wasps, although we are so with their executive power; and who knows but what their humming and buzzing, monotonous to our gross organs, have the variety of accent necessary for the promulgation and the execution of their laws?

A WONDERFUL ACCOUNT OF AN ANT-HILL, IN SOUTH-AMERICA.

“IN the middle of an immense savannah, or swamp, perfectly level as far as the eye could carry, I observed a little hill, which appeared to be formed by men. My companion told me it was an ant-hill. What! said I, is this gigantic construction made by an insect? He proposed to conduct me, not to the hill, where we might have been devoured, but near the road of the labourers. We soon discovered several columns of ants going to and coming from the forest, and bringing back pieces of leaves, roots, and seeds, or grains. Those ants were of the largest size, but I did not venture to observe them too nearly. Their habitation, which I examined at about forty paces off, appeared to be about fifteen or twenty feet high, and about thirty or forty diameter at its base. Its shape was that of a pyramid cut off at a third of its proper height. I was informed that when a planter had the misfortune to discover one of these formidable fortresses in clearing his newly-acquired lands, he was obliged to abandon his establishment, unless he was powerful enough to carry on a regular siege. My informer said this happened to himself; he wished to extend his plantations, and discovered such a hut as was then before us. He caused a deep circular ditch to be dug, and filled with pieces of dry wood, and after having set fire to the whole circumference, he attacked the ant-hill with cannon. The demolition of the fabric dispers-

ed the army of ants, which, having no means of retreat, perished in the flames which issued from the ditch. What can be the cause of this immense re-union of ants, in the same place, and engaged in the same direction of labour, of collecting provisions, and of co-habitation, whilst they have at their disposal vast extents of lands and plentiful food? It appears probable, that in these deserts they find a number of enemies among the birds, the reptiles, and even the quadrupeds, such as the ant-bear, against whom their number, if dispersed, can do nothing. They have conceived the plan of a confederation so powerful and so harmonic, that even the curious, who appear at the limits of their empire, are not tempted to encroach. It may truly be said, that this population is raised in mass against every assailant; for the most robust man or animal who might approach the ant-hill, would in an instant be covered and devoured by myriads of ants." In the Philosophical Transactions may be found a circumstantial account of this species of ants, with several plates of their habitations, by Smeathman. "Since this I saw in Cayenne, another species of ants no less wonderful, and more useful, as it remains in peace and alliance with men, and it pursues only flies, lizards, caterpillars, scorpions, rats and mice. I have seen them arrive from the country in columns, enter the town by the gate, run over the houses, where they were fearlessly allowed to enter, and return after their execution, in the same order, and out of the same gate. I leave to naturalists the care of classing and describing the species; it is the moral part of animals which interests me."

REFLECTIONS.

"The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." The mind of the royal Psalmist was most agreeably affected when he said, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches!" Animal life is distributed into ten thousand channels, from the crawling insect up to the elephant of gigantic magnitude. The gradation is wonderful, and every step replete with displays of Divine Wisdom. Every part of animated nature, from the "king of beasts," the enormous hissing serpent, down to the diminutive ant, has its use on this terrestrial ball. Not any thing amongst the works of God was made in vain. Creative wisdom and creative power, in all their various combinations, always plan, and execute to purpose.—The contemplation of the extensive scale of being, and complicated chain of animal existence, affords the most exquisite pleasure. The insect, however small, is, notwithstanding, a world of wonders. May every thing created lead the mind to adore the Great Creator!

Miscellaneous.

For the Methodist Magazine.

FARTHER OBSERVATIONS ON CONSISTENCY OF CHARACTER.

A CONSISTENT character is still the object of our pursuit. But we wish not to be misunderstood. We are not looking beyond the limits of human beings. Though among those human beings upon whom the light of Christianity has shone, and in whose hearts its renovating influence is experienced, we expect to behold a line of conduct far different from other people. Here we are authorized to look for a radical difference in characters—to behold those marks by which they may be infallibly distinguished from the men of the world. If this radical difference does not exist, then Christianity has nothing to recommend itself to the consideration of intelligent beings—we might as well be Jews, Heathens, or Mahometans, as to be Christians, if we still retain our old passions unmortified, our understanding unenlightened, our will unsubdued, and our conscience uninfluenced by the immutable principles of moral integrity. Neither is humility, self-possession, self-government, and a prudent management of our time, as well as a decent regulation of our exterior deportment, less essential than stern integrity, to form the consistent character.

But after making this avowal, we remark that the consistency after which we seek, is, nevertheless, such as is compatible with human infirmities; and therefore we should consider ourselves chargeable with that very defect which it is our object to condemn, were we to exclude from the communion of saints, or reprimand for condemnable neglect, all those who exhibit any of those innocent infirmities which are the inseparable companions of human beings. We do not expect to see the perfection of angels shewing itself in beings shrouded with flesh and blood. A consistent *human character*, though acting from those high principles which Christianity inspires, and manifesting that dignity of deportment which becomes servants of the Most High God, is still a *human being*; and, as such, his knowledge is exceedingly limited, his power circumscribed, and he is so constituted as to be liable to be influenced by external causes which act upon him entirely independent of his controul, and often produce results which the subject himself, could he have foreseen them, might, and probably would have avoided. And what philanthropic bosom can avoid commiserating the person, who may have been guilty of an impropriety, through the operation of any of those causes which took the advantage of his

ignorance, weakness, or perhaps seeming forgetfulness or absence of mind? We think this kind of commiseration is expressly enjoined by scripture,* and that it is one of those excellencies, which it is the peculiar province of Christianity to impart to its disciples. The sigh of sympathy is the sweetest cordial put into the cup of life. The sorrowful heart responds to it with exquisite pleasure and grateful delight.

It is not intended, however, by the preceding remarks, to furnish an excuse for those who are *willingly ignorant* of what they ought to know, nor for those who neglect what they ought to do.

To form a consistent character, among other ingredients, it seems essentially requisite for a man to qualify himself, by previous study and a diligent application to that particular science which embraces the art or profession which he designs to make the practice of his life, to fill his station with dignity and usefulness. Who such a novice as to anticipate an establishment as a mechanic before he had learnt a trade? If a man take upon himself the profession of a Lawyer, or Statesman, we expect to find him conversant in the law of nations, the municipal regulations peculiar to separate and independent communities, and especially with the laws of his own country. Can the soldier be expected to acquit himself with honour in the field of battle who is unacquainted with military tactics? Is it not expected that the Physician, to be qualified for a practical application of his art, should be thoroughly acquainted with the human system, the nature of the various diseases with which man is afflicted, and of the several remedies comprehended in the pharmacopœia? Have we not a right to expect that an ambassador of God, should understand His purposes respecting man; have a comprehensive view of the grand system of redemption and salvation; a clear perception of the relative and social duties; and a capacity to explain and defend all the great truths of divine revelation?

But the inconsistency of the character we are now considering, called *Precipitans*, consists principally in his acting under the influence of a belief, that *purity of intention* will atone for every *impropriety of conduct*. We will give him credit, therefore, for the goodness of his heart, while we claim the right of censuring the imprudences of his actions. Would any well-informed person think it a sufficient extenuation for a Physician, who through avoidable ignorance of disease or the nature of medicine, should murder his patient instead of saving his life? Why did he enter, it might be asked, upon the practice of an art he did not understand? A good heart and a wise head form

* Gal. vi. 1.

the consistent man. But *Precipitans*, acting under the influence of the erroneous belief above mentioned, neglects those means of improvement which a beneficent Providence hath put within his reach, and remains destitute of that knowledge so important to enable him to form a correct judgment of the time and manner of performing duty. On this account he often precipitates himself into difficulties, renders, by the use of improper means, his laudable attempts to do good ineffectual, and fails in the accomplishment of his designs by undertaking that which is beyond his ability.

Not having surveyed subjects with that impartial and minute attention, so necessary to qualify a man to decide accurately, he subjects himself to merited mortifications by his premature and erroneous judgments. Impelled on by an unrestrained avidity of knowing every thing, he pronounces without due deliberation upon subjects of the most weighty and momentous nature; and such is his vanity, that contradiction is considered an insult; and not having attained to that expansion of mind by habits of close thinking, and of general information, as to feel the force of logical argument, nor to that elasticity of spirit as to yield to the impression of evidence, to reason with him is labour lost, and to adduce testimony is useless.

We blame not a man for a temporary absence of mind, nor for an involuntary incoherency of thought; but we blame those who, when they have it in their power, neglect to enlarge their province of knowledge, and thus, through an affected contempt of mental improvement, remain ignorant of what most concerns them to know. We blame such men as *Precipitans*, who rush themselves into difficulties for want of deliberating upon their steps, and who expose themselves to contempt, by professing to understand what they have never studied, and to do what is beyond their ability. The goodness of motive can never atone for the mischievous consequences of such precipitate behaviour. Purity of motive, may, indeed, palliate for those mistakes in conduct which are the effect of unavoidable weakness; but they can never serve as an excuse for those inconsistencies which are the result of inactivity in the pursuit of truth, or of a vain confidence in superior ability. True knowledge stands at an equal distance from each of these defects.

Neither is it sufficient for man merely to learn, by committing to memory, a few popular phrases, without associating with those phrases the primitive ideas they were intended to convey. This is another fault of which *Precipitans* is guilty. Having borrowed a few moral maxims and evangelical sentences from some favourite author, he pronounces them with such emphasis and seeming sincerity, that serves for a season to dazzle the eyes of those whose knowledge of him is but superficial. But

will a jingle of words—perhaps pilfered from some hackneyed author, whose fame, raised upon the light breeze of the popular breath, must as certainly expire as man is given to change,—supply the place of that solid wisdom, which can only be acquired by a close and patient investigation, and a sound experience? Precipitans can pronounce, with sufficient emphasis, *sublime devotion, worldly abstraction, refined religious feeling and duration of eternity*. But will the mere enunciation of these words answer as a substitute for *devotion itself, for spiritual mindedness, for simplicity of intention, and for living in the light of eternity*! To speak is one thing, but to live and feel what we speak is quite another.

Those who have accurately studied the heart of man, and have perceived the various springs of human action, are already apprized of the proneness of mankind to duplicity. That studied line of conduct, which seeks to accommodate itself to times, particularly to the age in which we live, and to the company with which we may be surrounded, may be consistent with human policy and worldly prudence; but it is totally incompatible with the genuine sincerity and dignified simplicity of the Christian character. A man acting from that honest integrity which Christianity inspires, needs not the tinsels of human prudence, nor the courtly complacence of the artful sycophant, to recommend himself to the favour and consideration of others: the honest simplicity of intention by which he is actuated will exhibit an amiableness of character, and inspire a confidence, which will procure the favour of all who estimate true worth of character as they ought. Such a man assumes, without intending it, a commanding attitude; and his very presence produces a more forcible effect than a thousand arguments in the mouth of such men as Precipitans. His external deportment presents an exact resemblance of the inward sentiments of the heart. The fire of wisdom sparkles in his countenance, while the graces of the Spirit adorn every action of his life. Having decorated his brow with that solid science which he has dug from the mine of truth, and refined in the furnace of experience—while a deep sense of his many deficiencies and of his entire dependence on God, tends to clothe his mind with the mantle of humility—he shines with a lustre which acquires increased splendour from intimate acquaintance. While a thorough knowledge of himself hides his excellencies in his own estimation, others, and especially those who are his most intimate associates, behold him with admiration, as an example worthy of emulation. His consistency, therefore, is the natural result of the operation of Christian principles upon his heart, producing the happy combination of purity of intention and wisdom of conduct.

BENEFIT OF EMBRACING RELIGION IN YOUTH, IN A LETTER FROM
MISS S. TO HER FEMALE FRIEND.*My dear and much loved friend,*

TIME nor distance has never been able to dissolve that affection which I have ever had for you. Although a wise Providence has seen fit to vary our circumstances by disposing of us in different situations in life, and endowing us with different capacities, yet we stand in the same relation to each other as it concerns our spiritual welfare ; and are as intimately connected in the great chain of beings who are to exist for ever as we ever were. I heard of your late indisposition, and could not refrain from tears at the recollection of the past events of our youth. Undoubtedly you think occasionally of me. You must, I am sure, as the most favourable period of your existence is that in which you were acquainted with me ; and it was surely the most important one of mine, because it was then that life and immortality were brought to me through the gospel, even a free pardon of all my sins through a risen Saviour. Several years have already passed away since we were brought to see ourselves destitute of true happiness in this life, or of a well-grounded hope in that which is to come. We saw that childhood and youth were vanity. Although the sun of prosperity smiled upon your earliest days, still you confessed there was no pleasure in these fading objects. Does your mind still retain the same sentiments ? I hope, I trust that it does, and that you are seeking for that happiness which is not like the sunbeams dancing upon the wave. Our morning of life is now almost past ; the delusions of youth are fled like a dream ; the things which once gave us pleasure can delight us no more.

The spring returns, and re-animated nature brings to mind those sensations of joy which we once felt : but our rapture is diminished from having learned by experience that its charms so soon fade.

How descriptive of fading youth ! That sprightliness of imagination, that vivacity of spirits, which mark the youthful period of existence, seldom appear in the decline of life. Like the zephyrs which raise the gentle wave, and give place to tempestuous winds which cause the foaming surges to beat against the rocky shore, and in their furious blast carry the sighs of despairing mariners to heaven ; so the charms of spring depart ; so the playful scenes of youth recede, and are succeeded by the storms of life, in which, we have to contend with many a furious blast. Though retired in the vale of obscurity, our hearts have been often wrung with anguish at the relation of such melancholy scenes.

Nevertheless, every season has its peculiar charm, and may convey some instructive lesson : but have we improved from them as we ought? Though we may have lost, in some measure, our relish for those things, which formerly attracted our attention, yet we may profit from their recollection. Experience teaches us correctly the fallibility of all earthly enjoyments ; there are no errors connected with its friendly instructions ; we may, therefore, safely rely upon its salutary discipline, however painful it may be.

I rejoice, my beloved friend, that I have gained such a happy conquest over this vain world ; and my consolation is still greater in the reflection of having sought wisdom in that period of life when external objects have the most powerful attractions and influence over the youthful mind. I am still pressing forward, animated by that cheering hope which first inspired my breast, to gain the rest which remains to the people of God, and a residence in that kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness. The intrinsic worth of religion is sensibly felt. The more I understand of its excellencies, and the more I am habituated to its divine laws, the higher I prize it. Here is a durable substance. It is immortal life ! It is the spotless image of God. It is the power of His Spirit, the brightness of his glory, and the reflection of his holy character upon the soul. O ! how this season shines, brightened by his effulgent rays. Spring is welcome, because it reminds me of that Eternal Spring which is soon to open upon the soul, where blossoms shall never wither, nor leaves ever fade ; where neither clouds nor tempests shall disturb the atmosphere inhaled by immortal spirits. O ! my friend, shall we meet there ? shall we, who set out in this gracious cause together, arrive safe upon those celestial hills ? Grant it Almighty God ! and although on this earth we may never meet, yet in yonder blissful world may we unite in songs of praise to the Lamb who sitteth on the throne for ever and ever.

S.

From the Christian Watchman.

"REVIEWER" REVIEWED,

BY REV. T. MERRITT.

THE "Christian Disciple and Theological Review," is a Unitarian periodical work published in Boston. In the number for November and December, 1820, there appeared a "Review" of Mr. Southey's *Life of Wesley*, in which that work is recommended as an "Able and impartial history of the rise and establishment of Methodism." The following observations have respect to the "Review" chiefly, as the Reviewers, by re-

commending that history, have become answerable for the sentiments it contains, so far at least as they are given in the Review.

It is a matter of no importance to Wesley at this time, whatever opinions men form of his character and labours; and it would be of as little to the living, were not his character identified with the religion he taught. “Methodism,” so called, claims him, under God, for its founder; and having had a rapid growth, and acquired considerable influence in the world, causes him to be more spoken of than most other men. Nor is it surprising that men should form different opinions of some parts of his conduct and the motives which influenced them; but it is not so easy to account for the unqualified censure and odium thrown upon that religion, the happy effects of which have been experienced by hundreds of thousands in Christendom, and which continue to be experienced in its widening course at the present day. But it is most of all to be regretted that men possessing learning, and professing Christianity, should lend their aid to check the progress of piety, by recommending a work which strikes at the root of all vital godliness, while it represents experimental religion as “superstition and fanaticism,” and invidiously casts a shade over the character it professes to delineate. The best apology we can make for the Reviewers is to suppose they possessed but little knowledge of Wesley and Methodism previous to their reading Mr. Southey’s history; and we are the more inclined to think thus from their own words: “An able and impartial history of the rise and establishment of Methodism was a desideratum till the appearance of this valuable work.” Such a work might be a desideratum with the Reviewers, but not with those who had read the equally “able,” and more “impartial” history of the same events by Dr. Thomas Coke and Mr. H. More, or that by Dr. John Whitehead, or any of the unprejudiced biographers of Mr. Wesley.

The attention of the Reviewers is directed chiefly to those parts of Mr. Southey’s history which treat upon what they call Wesley’s “enthusiasm, fanaticism and superstition;” his dispute with the Calvinists, and what they consider the “evil effects of Methodism.”

Upon which we would observe, that we were generally prepared to meet their views of experimental religion, because we knew them, and were not disappointed that those “who, could themselves, think ardour comes from hell,” should represent it as “fanaticism.” But we cannot dissemble that in one respect we are disappointed. It was reasonable to expect that the Reviewers would correct the errors of the work passing under their eye, at least the palpable ones; that if they saw any disingenuousness, any attempt to make a false impression by stating facts out of their proper time and connection, any false colouring,

any attempt to magnify the errors, or withhold the "meed of praise" due to the subject of the history they were reviewing, they would have noticed it impartially, and not have advanced upon it in a two-fold ratio by false insinuations and illiberal reflections of their own. But we are sorry to say that we do not discover in the "Review," the evidence of all that liberality of sentiment which the conductors of the *Disciple* have professed, and which has been the boast of their denomination: but on the contrary we find that the longest life devoted to the service of God and man, a life the most disinterested and useful, can obtain no praise from them but that which is as cold as the breath of a dying man. We proceed to notice some of the more prominent features of the *Review*.

As leading to Mr. Wesley's superstition, and the fanaticism of Methodism, Mr. Southey and the Reviewers bring forward a story of "various noises heard in and about his father's house, while he was at school" at the charter-house in London. But whether the story be true or false, we cannot see how it is to affect the character of Mr. Wesley or of Methodism, (although by the way, the Reviewers tell us it "gained the sanction of Mr. Southey's belief,") or how he is to be made answerable for it, any more than for the reported witchcrafts of Salem, we are at present unable to see. They also made themselves merry with what they call a "comical" conversion of a Catholic, at Wexford, in Ireland, who being placed as a spy upon a Methodist meeting, the better to conceal himself, crawled into a sack, where he was convicted and cried out. But we who believe in being converted, though we acknowledge this to be more "comical," cannot see that it is a whit more incredible than the conversion of Saul, on his way to Damascus.

"It was at the University, we are told, that Wesley first distinguished himself by his religious zeal. He was powerfully affected by reading the work commonly attributed to Thomas a Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, and Bishop Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*. That part in particular which relates to purity of intention, affected him exceedingly. 'Instantly,' he says, 'I resolved to dedicate *all* my life to God—*all* my thoughts, and words, and actions.'" We could not have supposed that the Reviewers meant to ridicule this part of Mr. Wesley's conduct, had it not been accompanied by the following observation: "It is a little remarkable, (say they) that those who were afterwards noted for extravagant irregularity in their manner of life, should have received a distinguishing appellation from the order and *method* with which they originally lived, picking up, as they said, the very fragments of time, that not a moment of it might be lost." Is it "fanaticism," we would ask, for a man to "dedicate himself to God?" or does the "fanaticism" consist in his "dedica-

ting *all* his thoughts, words and actions to God?" or in his doing it "instantly" upon conviction of duty? Again, did they mean, by placing what they call "extravagant irregularity in their manner of life," in opposition to "the order and *method* with which they originally lived," to insinuate that they *abandoned that* "order and method," and became loose, immoral men?

What follows is a mere jumble, and such a misrepresentation of facts, as nothing can either justify or excuse.

"They," Whitefield, Wesley, and their companions, "were peculiar in their dress and habits of life, and so abstemious as greatly to injure their health, in consequence of which, one of their number died, and Wesley seemed likely soon to follow him to an early grave. A visit to his friends in some measure restored him, and he was urged by them to leave Oxford, and apply for the cure in which his father had laboured for many years. But he obstinately refused, alleging that he thought he might do more good at the University. It was not long after this, however, that he thought himself called to go to America, to convert the Indians; and accordingly in Oct. 1735, he left Oxford for Savannah. There he continued two years, and accomplished little besides making himself obnoxious to the settlers," &c.

It is readily admitted that "they were peculiar," that is, *plain* "in their dress and habits of life," and we add, *self-denied in all things*, that they might have the more to bestow on the poor. But there is no proof that they were so superstitiously "abstemious as greatly to injure their health;" and much less that "in consequence of which one of their number died." It is presumed that reference is here had to Mr. Morgan, Commoner of Christ Church, who left Oxford on the 5th of June, 1732 and died in Dublin on the 26th of August following, as no other of "their number died" at, or near the time of which they speak. Many false reports were put in circulation about this time, of the "superstition and enthusiasm of the Methodists, which, coming to the ears of Morgan's father in Ireland, together with an account of the ill state of his son's health, which had been on the decline more than a year, he wrote to him reproving and expostulating with him. But after the young man's death, it was reported that the rigorous fasting he had imposed on himself, by the advice of the Messrs. Wesleys, had hastened his death. On the 18th of October, therefore, Mr. J. Wesley wrote to Mr. Morgan a statement of facts as they really were, and among other things, says, "Your son left off fasting about a year and a half since, and it is not yet half a year since I began to practise it." This letter so fully removed Mr. Morgan's prejudices against the Methodists, that a friendly correspondence took place be-

tween him and Mr. Wesley, and the following year he placed his only surviving son under Mr. Wesley's care at the University.*

Where the Reviewers got the information that the Methodists, at this time "were so abstemious as greatly to injure their health," "that Wesley from the same cause seemed likely soon to follow his departed friend to an early grave," we cannot tell, as there is no mention by any of his biographers that we have seen, of their being injured at all. But we do find that Mr. Wesley, made two journies to Epworth on *foot*, in the course of this summer, ("going considerably out of his way, to spend a night or two with a friend," says Dr. Whitehead) and returned the second time on the 23d of September, within a month after the death of Mr. Morgan; which he could not have done had his health been as poor as it is represented. And we would observe that Mr. Wesley performed all his journies on foot, during this and the preceding year, and reckons 1050 miles he had *walked* in the course of one of them. It was on one of these occasions, in 1731, that he makes the following remark. "The motion and sun together, in our late hundred and fifty miles walk, so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humours, that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season." White. L. of W. v. i. p. 438, 418. This was only the year before the death of Mr. Morgan.

But did not "his friends urge him to leave Oxford, and apply for the cure" of Epworth, in order to wean him from his superstition, and restore his health? So we should suppose the *Reviewers* meant to be understood; but the *truth* is, "his father having become infirm, and his brother Samuel going to reside wholly at *Tiverton* in *Devon*, he went, that the whole family might once more assemble together, before their final separation by death. White. Life of Wesley, vol. 1. p. 434. "But he obstinately refused," say they, to apply for the cure of Epworth, "alleging that he thought he might do more good at the University." If Mr. Wesley is to be credited for his alleged motive, "that he thought he might do more good at the University" the epithet "obstinately," is a transgression of the law of candour and fair-dealing. They should have said he *conscientiously* refused.

"It was not long after this, however," say they, "that he thought himself called to go to America, to convert the Indians." It was in January, 1733, that his friends proposed he should apply for the cure of Epworth; and it was on the 14th of October, 1735, near three years after, that he set out for America. We hope his going to America to "convert the Indians," at the re-

* *Vide* Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. i. p. 427, &c. Dublin edit. 1805.

quest of the Trustees for Georgia, will not be considered a mark of "fanaticism" and "quixotry" by the religious public, whatever the Reviewers and Deists may think of it. We have in more than one instance traced a resemblance between the views of the Reviewers, and those of Deists, respecting religion; and if we may use the term "quixotry" on this occasion, which the Reviewers apply more generally to the minds of the Methodists, we shall have a striking instance of this resemblance in the case before us. When Mr. Wesley had determined on going to America, "to convert the Indians," a known infidel said to him, "What is this, Sir? Are *you* turned quixote too?—Mr. Wesley replied, "Sir, if the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive. But if it be of God, I am sober-minded." Coke's L. of W. p. 84. We are persuaded that Mr. Wesley, so far from changing his mind in consenting to go a Missionary to Georgia, only manifested a continuation and higher exercise of that determined resolution of being separate from the world, which he had evinced in his refusal to solicit the Living of Epworth. But if his *motives* are to be justified in going to America, yet his conduct there is not so happy as to escape censure, for say the Reviewers, "He did little besides making himself obnoxious to the settlers, and forming an acquaintance with some of the Moravian brethren, which greatly furthered his progress in fanaticism."—They should have said, "furthered his progress" in the knowledge of himself, and his devotion to God. Truth and candour also required them to say, "he made himself obnoxious to the settlers" in the same way that Jesus Christ and the apostles made themselves "obnoxious" to the enemies of the gospel, 'by his plain gospel sermons, his faithful reproofing of sin, and his scrupulous adherence to the rubrics of the Church of which he was a member. Silence in such a case is detraction.

We now come to the important period when the subject of Mr. Southey's history found what he had long been seeking, justification by faith. And here we cannot but express our regret, that the Reviewers should seem willing to excite a smile, at the expense of the doctrine of the new birth, by their manner of speaking of it.

"For several months after his return" to England, say they, "he felt, as he expressed it, that he was sold under sin; that he deserved nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations;" but the reader will learn from the following passage, that he was born again at a quarter before nine o'clock, P. M. on the 24th of May, 1738." Do the Reviewers smile at the thought of a man's being "born again?" or at his noting the time so definitely? If at the former, we beg leave to say to them, "*Are ye masters in Israel, and know not this thing.*" But if at the

latter, we shall only observe, that if there be such a thing as the New-Birth, there must be a moment when the important event takes place.

Mr. Wesley says an "assurance was given him," at the time above mentioned, "that his sins were taken away, and he was saved from the law of sin and death;" and adds, "but it was not long before the enemy suggested, this cannot be faith, for where is thy joy?" Upon which the Reviewers say, "Here was a plain contradiction in terms—an assurance which had not assured him." We, however, can see no contradiction in Wesley's terms here; and we doubt not if they had attended to that "instinctive logic, which," they tell us, "is grounded on common sense," they would have viewed the subject as we do; and if they had exercised a little more of that "liberality," and "catholic spirit," they recommend to others, they would not have referred Mr. Wesley's assurance and doubts to the same period, contrary to his words, as they themselves have quoted them.

Whether Mr. S. and the Reviewers have rendered a useful service to the public by the compliment they pay the "enemy," as Wesley calls him, *alias* the devil, by substituting for his being, "that instinctive logic which is grounded on common sense," and for his agency in producing sin, "the personified principle of evil," we shall not stop now to inquire. But we would solicit attention to what we conceive a total misrepresentation of Mr. Wesley's meaning, by the Reviewers. They introduce the subject thus: "If all he says of himself soon after this, (his justification) be true, we think he had better have remained as he was. How he judged of himself at this time, appears from the result of a curious self-examination in which he tried himself by the test of Saint Paul: *If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, &c.* 'First, says Wesley, his judgments are new; his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness. He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God; to have no good thing abiding in him, but all that is corrupt and abominable, &c. Thus by the grace of God in Christ I judge of myself,'—that is, he *now* judged this to be his fallen, natural state. That this was Wesley's meaning, the slightest attention to the examination referred to above, (which is now before us) will show. But the Reviewers have seized upon the opportunity which Mr. Southey afforded them, to turn this serious business into ridicule, by representing him as saying he had, after the change alluded to above, no good thing abiding in him, but all that is corrupt and abominable;" and then they say, "we think he had better have remained as he was." And we think that theological reviewers have much mistaken the character, and importance of the

New-Birth, whenever they misrepresent a man's meaning, for the purpose of ridiculing it, and bringing it, and religion, into contempt.

Connected with the above the Reviewers give us from Mr. S. an "anecdote"—a mutilated conversation which took place between Mr. Wesley on one side, and a Mr. Hutton and his wife on the other, in which we acknowledge the "readiness" of Mrs. H. at repartee; but what has that to do with the subject? The subject is too serious for wit and raillery; we will therefore give, in the following dialogue, the sentiments of Wesley a little more at large than they have done.

W. I believe it is my duty to make you acquainted with what God has lately done for my soul. You all know my former manner of life; "but I must tell you that I was not a Christian till within five days past."

H. Not a Christian till five days past! You surprise me. "Have a care Mr. Wesley, how you despise the benefits received by the two sacraments."

W. The sacraments never could put holiness into my heart, nor give me an assurance of God's favour, while I remained in unbelief.

Mrs. H. "If you were not a Christian, Mr. Wesley, ever since I knew you, you were a great hypocrite, for you made us all believe you were one."

W. I *know* I was not a Christian. I was indeed seeking and striving with all my might, but how to attain I knew not, till it pleased God to reveal his Son in me through faith. "When we renounce all our own works, and come to Christ by faith, then, and not till then, have we any reason to believe that we are Christians."

H. "If faith only was necessary to save us, why did our Saviour give us his divine sermon on the mount?"

W. I do not deny that good works are necessary to salvation; but we must receive Christ by faith, and be born again of the Spirit, before we can have good works, agreeable to our Lord's words, *Make the tree good, that the fruit may be good also*. But if we go about to establish our own righteousness, and do not submit to the righteousness of God—to God's merciful method of saving sinners, we shall find our "Lord's sermon on the mount to be the letter that killeth."

H. "Hold! You seem not to know what you say; are our Lord's words the letter that killeth?"

W. Not his words, but a misapplication of them.—*I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness*. For many years I sought, by all the means in my power, to justify myself. I denied myself, used the means of grace, fasted and prayed, gave all my goods to feed the poor, visited the sick and them

that were in prison ; I devoted my body to labour and pain, and gave my whole life, to the service of God and man, as you can bear me witness, and on that account suffered reproach.— But all this brought me not peace of mind, because I had an *evil heart of unbelief, ever prone to depart from the living God*. Sinful desires and tempers reigned over me, and I truly *laboured, and was heavy laden*. Thus I continued for a long time ; but of late I saw my error, changed my course, renounced my own righteousness, and trusted alone in the merits of Christ for pardon. Then I found what I wanted, a change of heart, power over sin, and peace with God. *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*

(To be Continued.)

From the London Methodist Magazine.

ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CITY OF ROME.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Redruth, March 2, 1820.

THE following article is copied from Travels in Italy by F. L. De Chateavieux, Citizen of Geneva. Perhaps you may deem it worthy a place in the Magazine. The philosopher may view the subject with indifference, but the Christian reader will connect the history of Rome with the Sure Word of Prophecy. He will perceive in the dilapidations of this “Queen of Cities” not the *mere effect of old age*, but that the hand of God hath touched her.—I am, very respectfully, dear Sir, your’s,

J—.

“ROME, June 29, 1812.

“In speaking of Rome, I shall say nothing of the Coliseum, or the Capitol, but I shall endeavour to pourtray that city, bowed down with the weight of ages, and of glory, arrived at the final term of her destiny, and already presenting nothing but a mighty ruin. I shall simply relate the impressions which I experienced myself. Perhaps the reader may share them with me. Perhaps I may enable him to form some idea of the great scene of destruction daily accomplishing within the walls of Rome ; a scene, the melancholy grandeur of which is, however, beyond the reach of language, and more solemn than all human ceremonies ; it is the great funeral of the dead, to be worthily celebrated only by the voice of the desert and the waves of the Tiber.

"I was at Rome in 1791 ; the city, at that time, contained one hundred and sixty-six thousand inhabitants : the streets were filled with sumptuous equipages and liveries, and decorated with magnificent palaces, in which strangers were received with pressing hospitality ; every thing, in short, had an appearance of opulence and splendour. On the present occasion, I entered the city by the same road ; but, instead of equipages, it was filled with droves of cattle, goats, and half-wild horses, which a number of Tartar-looking herdsmen, armed with long pikes, and wrapped in cloaks were driving before them. The air was filled with the clouds of dust which they raised.

"These men come every evening with their flocks to seek an asylum within the walls of Rome, from the fate which awaits them in the fields. They take possession of the streets and palaces, which are abandoned by the inhabitants, as the population diminishes, and as the advance of the noxious atmosphere drives them towards the centre of the city. The Porta del Popolo, a part of the Corso, the entire quarters of Quirinale, of La Trinita del Monte, and the Trastevere, are already deserted ; and the country people have taken up their residence in them. The population is now reduced to one hundred thousand, and of this number ten thousand are vine-dressers, herdsmen, or gardeners. There are extensive districts in Rome, which are nothing more than villages, inhabited by the peasantry, whom the pestilential atmosphere has compelled to abandon their habitations in the country. So rapid a depopulation in the space of twenty-two years, is almost without example. The political events which have occurred during that period, have, no doubt, contributed in some degree to occasion this reduction ; but its principal cause must be referred to the general circumstances of the city, and to the effect of the Malaria, (the pestilential atmosphere.) This scourge is every year advancing ; every year it invades some fresh street, some new square or quarter, and every year its terrible influence is augmented ; for it increases precisely in the inverse ratio of the resistance occasioned by the population. The fewer inhabitants there are, the more victims ; and one funeral is always the fore-runner of many others. It is, therefore, probable, that we are arrived at that period of the history of this Queen of Cities, which is destined to strip her of her splendour, and leave her, of all her glory, nothing but her immortal name.

"The walls of Rome, like those of Volterra, will contain nothing but a vast assemblage of monuments, palaces, and ruins of all ages. The goat-herd, the vine-dresser, and the shepherd, will dwell in her porticos. Thus will terminate the history of Rome. She has long survived her rivals ; but, like Athens and Persepolis, she must experience the common fate of all that the

hand of man hath raised, and be destroyed. The city presents every where the appearance of ruin. As there are many more houses than inhabitants, they are never repaired; when they get out of order the occupiers move to others. Neither doors, stairs, nor roofs, are ever replaced; they tumble to pieces, and are left to remain where they fall. Multitudes of convents have thus acquired the appearance of ruins; and a great number of palaces no longer habitable, are left without even a porter to take care of them. This universal neglect has, together with the droves of cattle and Tartar-looking people which fills the streets, already occasioned a striking appearance of desolation and decay.

“For a long time to come it is probable that a certain population consisting of the possessors of property, will be concentrated about the middle of the city, and there struggle against the pestilential atmosphere; while all the rest of Rome, abandoned to the elements, will be nothing but a vast heap of solitary ruins. Such is the scene which strikes you on passing through those quarters of the city which have been long deserted, and which present a singular mixture of town and country, of porticos and of miserable huts. I was, one evening, contemplating this scene, at once so impressive and extraordinary, from the garden of a ruined convent, between the Coliseum and the Temple of Peace. Before me lay the valley which separates the Palatine Hill from Mount Cælius, with the arch of Constantine and the Via Sacra. On the summit of the Hill of the Cæsars, rose the Deputy of Africa, the palm tree, displaying itself in the azure sky, like a last trophy of glories past; while on the opposite hill a row of Cypresses extended like a funeral decoration to the verge of the horizon, and seemed to mourn that these glories were departed. On the other side of the Tiber, towards the Basilicum of St. Peter, and the Porta Angelica, I passed through streets entirely deserted, and which were inhabited only by the herdsmen who come to pass the night in this insecure asylum. All the environs of the Vatican were abandoned in like manner. I was particularly struck with this loneliness on going early one morning to the church of St. Peter. The sun was just rising as I entered the area; the gates of the temple were still closed, a profound tranquillity reigned throughout, interrupted only by the distant tinkling of the bells of flocks which were returning to the pastures.

“The obelisk still rested on its brazen pediment, and the two fountains were pouring forth their everlasting streams. The pavement was not trodden by a single foot, and I arrived at the vestibule without meeting a human being. The freshness of the morning, and the tints of the dawn, diffused an inexpressible charm over this Divine solitude. I contemplated at once

the temple, the porticos, and the heavens, and for the first time felt the full effect of those magnificent phenomena with which nature accompanies the rising and the declining day."

A LETTER FROM MR. BRADBURN TO A YOUNG PREACHER.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I AM well pleased with your letter, as it shews a good spirit, and a very proper disposition for one in your situation. Your questions are of great importance; but you must look farther than mortals to get them answered to your satisfaction. However you need not doubt of receiving all the help that I can give you at any time.

To maintain variety, and to have always something substantial, it will be necessary to observe two things;—read much, and study closely: without this you have no ground to go upon.

Lay yourself under a rigid restraint when you are preaching, that neither deadness, nor great freedom, may be able to make you either deviate from your point in hand, to get a supply from foreign subjects, or prompt you to say all you can on the one under present consideration. There are two sorts of preachers that I totally disapprove of—systematical and essay preachers. The first takes a text, only that he may repeat his creed. He begins with the fall of man, and runs through a body of divinity; so that when you have heard him once, you have, in effect, heard him always.

The second makes a discourse, or theme on some subject, and then puts a text at the top, as a kind of motto, which serves to introduce his harangue, and no more. Be not you like unto those; always make your sermon out of your text, and all full of substantial matter; so you will find a rich variety, and be enabled to bring forth abundance of provision to nourish the people of God, instead of feeding them with chaff.

To take a paragraph of a chapter, or sometimes a whole chapter, is highly proper: only be careful that it be a passage which you can explain, and that when explained, will be of some use to the people. Never be tedious, but always brief and clear. This method will greatly help you. I frequently make use of it, and never find it fail to please the congregation; and depend upon it, if the people be not pleased with the preacher, they will not profit under him.

"It is said that "introductions are preachers' crosses." I do not let them be mine; for if no natural, easy introduction offers, I begin without one. But in general you can be at no loss, for a thousand things may serve this purpose, as times, places, circumstances require. Only let it be short, and have

an immediate connection with your subject. The conclusion of a discourse is of great consequence; it should always lead to the disposition of mind in which you wish to leave your hearers: it should be short and pathetic; and such as naturally flows from the subject.

Frequently to insist on the parables I would not recommend; it requires a great deal of skill to manage a parable well.—However, some of the parables are easier than others; only carefully avoid that execrable method of making them go upon *all-fours*. I mean the making a system of divinity of each of them. For instance,—I heard a person take for his text Luke x. from 30—35, and truly my heart ached to hear the fellow spout away in spite of common sense; telling us that the *certain man* was *Adam*; the *thieves* were the *devil* and *sin*; the *being wounded* by them meant the *fall* and its *effects*; the *Priest* and *Levite* were the *moral* and *ceremonial laws*; the *Samaritan* was *Jesus Christ*; the *beast* was the *gospel*; the *inn* the *church*; the *host*, *God*, &c. In short, I am ashamed to send such stuff on paper. Yet it was preached in a parish church some time after in the same manner, by one called a *gospel minister*! Now to see the absurdity of this exposition, look at the last clause of the 37th verse: “Go thou and do likewise.” What! go and redeem the world as Christ did? No, but go and shew mercy to every one in distress according to your power. Thus, in every parable you will find a pointed end which the parable is to illustrate: keep this end in view, or you will crucify the word of God, and do worse than nothing. To be concise, and yet sufficiently clear in proving what you advance, you may write your principal arguments, and clear them from every obscurity, before you go into the pulpit; and reduce them to as small a number as possible, and never let your reasoning be abstruse or far-fetched.

You should have some knowledge of logic, and, if possible, thoroughly understand it, as it is of great service; but never use any logical terms in the pulpit. In general, keep your divisions covered, and be as simple as possible in delivering your discourse.

Remember your business is to save souls, and that if this end be not answered, your reading, praying, studying, and preaching, will turn to poor account at last. Spend at least eight hours every day alone.

When you have read the books I recommended, write again to
Your truly affectionate

SAMUEL BRADBURN.

Religious and Missionary Intelligence.

For the Methodist Magazine.

Short Sketches of Revivals of Religion among the Methodists in the Western Country.

No. 5.

(Continued from page 228.)

RISE AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM IN THE NORTH-WESTERN TERRITORY (NOW STATE OF OHIO.)

IN order to give some idea of the rise and progress of Methodism in the Northwestern Territory, or that part of it which is at this time embraced in the bounds of the state of Ohio, we will have to follow on with the tide of population that passed into this wilderness at this early period.

The manuscript journal of Mr. Henry Smith, one of the first missionaries of the Miami and Scioto Countries, having been placed in our hands, we shall give the account of the progress of the work in that part of the Country in his own words, with such suitable remarks as may be necessary to shew the subsequent growth and extension of the work. In doing this it may be observed, that this journal exhibits not only Mr. Smith's labours, but what all those early heralds of the gospel had to endure at this early period, to plant the standard of the Redeemer's kingdom on these Western waters.

"In Autumn 1799 I first visited the Miami and Scioto Countries. I crossed the Ohio-River at the mouth of the Little-Miami on the 11th day of September, and on Sunday the 14th for the first time sounded the peaceful gospel of JESUS CHRIST to a listening few on the pleasant banks of the Miami, and the Lord was powerfully present: Some wept, and others shouted aloud for joy. Brother Lewis Hunt was then on that circuit (Miami) but we had been informed that his indisposition had disqualified him to fill up his appointments, and I was sent to take his place, but in case he had recovered, so far as to be able to go on in the work, I had orders to go up to Scioto and form a circuit there. After I had seen brother Hunt and found that he had recovered so far, as to go on in his circuit, we concluded to unite Scioto to Miami, and form a six weeks circuit of both. I set out and went up the Ohio river; the country was then but thinly inhabited: but I found several families friendly to religion. On the 26th inst. I found a neighbourhood on Eagle-Creek, fifteen or twenty miles above the mouth of the creek, where a few Methodist families had settled, and formed themselves into a kind of society: They were truly glad to see me, and rejoiced at the

prospect of having the gospel preached to them. I preached on Saturday the 27th at old brother Foster's to about eighteen or twenty attentive hearers; and on Sunday the 28th, four miles down the creek at the house of Peter Rankin, to a small but attentive congregation: Here I collected the poor scattered and starving sheep in the wilderness, and encouraged them to look up for better times. This was then the beginning of Scioto circuit.

"Tuesday the 31st. I preached at Wm. Burkitt's on Ohio Brush creek, where I found a small class which had removed there from different parts, and we had a precious time: Here they had Simon Fields, a good man for their leader, and brother Moore, a local preacher, from Scioto Brush creek preached to them. On Scioto Brush creek where brother Moore lived, I found a considerable society already formed, and a good congregation. At the mouth of Scioto, I found several Methodist families, who had removed there from *Redstone* and *Kentucky*, and Wm. Jackson, a local preacher, among them. Here I also formed a class, but had little success. At Pee-Pee (a creek of that name taken from two P's marked on a tree at its mouth, on Scioto-River) I found a considerable number who had been in society before. I preached at brother Seargent's, an old friend from Maryland, for the first time, on Sunday the 6th of October, 1799, and formed a class there of those who had been in society before in different parts from which they had moved; but found some in a barren, and some in a backslidden state. Wm. Talbott (once a travelling, but now a local preacher) was living there at that time: They all seemed to promise stability and diligence, and we had hopes of success in this place:—I went still higher up the river and got two more preaching places, one at Elijah Chinoworth's, and another at Thomas Foster's, at the house of the latter I soon formed a large class, and thought our prospect was very good. Here we had two local preachers, Lewis Foster and Jesse Mounts."

We have but few remarks to make illustrative of the work, so far. Brother Thomas Foster and his excellent family still continue to reside at this place: He is the patriarch of this settlement—Elijah Chinoworth, now resides on Darby creek, a branch of the Scioto fifty or sixty miles above, and has become the patriarch of a new settlement, and a large society formed around him. Old brother Lewis Foster, a very useful man, now resides on Darby also, not far distant from brother C's, where he is the patriarch and priest of a new and flourishing settlement. His place is supplied in his brother Thomas Foster's settlement by their brother John, who is acceptable as a preacher, and useful. Brother Mounts, after passing through much tribulation, continued faithful, when he was summoned to, and triumphantly

entered into a better country ! He died praising the Lord about 1811 or 1812.

"On the 10th of this month (Oct.) I preached at the house of Thomas Landsdale, on the *High bank* of Scioto (High bank prairie, east of Scioto river) where I afterwards collected a class ; but the people were living on what was called *Congress* land, and in a very unsettled situation, and withal very sickly. From there I went up to Deer-creek (on the west side of Scioto river) and on Sunday the 13th, I preached with great freedom to a very attentive and melted congregation." (This must have been at old brother Anthony Davenport's, where it is probable the first class was raised. Old brothers Henry and Thomas Bowdle, from Maryland, had settled in the vicinity on Dry-run, about this time : and in 1802 old brother White Brown settled at the mouth of Hay-run, on Deer creek, and became the patriarch of that settlement : His long and honourable standing in the church in the old country, and his great exertions in the cause, were the means of the work flourishing much in his settlement : The Camp meetings held first on his encampment, and afterwards at his chapel, will be long remembered by thousands. But to return to the journal.) "There I found a class already formed by Dr. Tiffin, who preached regularly to them, and had kept them together : We had a powerful time at our first meeting, and looked up for a revival of God's work, and an ingathering of precious souls."

"October 15 in the evening, for the first time, I preached in Chillicothe, to a considerable congregation ; here prejudice ran high against us, and Satan opposed us from the very beginning ; ten or twelve Methodists were living in the place, but we had no class till July 1800, when we united eighteen members together ; But alas ! some did no honour to the cause." (Too true oh King ! But the Lord did not give up Chillicothe—after various convulsions to rectify and correct evil doers, the Lord took the cause at length into his own hands, and has done great things for this people. The writer has many reasons for speaking well of Chillicothe—It was in this place he obtained a knowledge of himself as a sinner, and claims it as the place of his second birth : He has many valuable friends, highly prized, and highly esteemed friends, here ; and he knows of no society at this time of the same number of members any where, among whom he could expect to find more faithful and precious souls. There are now perhaps from four to five hundred members in the church here, and he saw at one time in a revival about one hundred blooming young men, who had just enlisted under the banners of the blessed Jesus ! and perhaps nearly as many females. So great has been the change from 1800 to 1820. Prejudices have been wiped away, and Methodism stands now

on good grounds here—Indeed the out-pouring of the spirit has been such, that it has almost changed the character of the place, from an abandonedly wicked to a moralized place. See account of revival, &c. in Chillicothe, Vol. II. page 235 Methodist Magazine.)

“I afterwards raised a class on Kinnianic creek at Mr. Crouse’s, and another at Henry Haines’s on the Pickaway plains, and visited two other places still further toward Hockhocking; in one place I could have collected a class, but could not take it into the circuit. A small class was raised about nine miles from Chillicothe, up Paint-creek, where brother William Kerns, a local preacher, lived; the people seemed to be fond of preaching in this place, and but little else could I see or hear of. I afterwards took Newmarket into the circuit, and the number of hearers that attended, and the seriousness of the people made the prospect flattering for a season.” (Here appears to be an erasure in the journal, four or five lines stricken out, perhaps from prudential motives, having reference to the people having been carried away by an unstable Presbyterian minister, for I can but make out to read it. That Presbyterian minister here alluded to, no doubt, is now a deeply experienced and pious Methodist preacher, who with several sons are bright and shining lights. He himself now an old travelling preacher, weather beaten, worn out and worn down, yet pressing through all weather, encountering every difficulty, and although now between sixty and seventy years of age, is so indefatigable in the work, that he puts the young preachers out of countenance; I know the goodness of his heart so well that were I to name him it would not give offence. He has two sons in the travelling connexion, one a presiding elder. Our very dear old brother F***** had been a distinguished preacher in the Presbyterian Church, but misfortunes and other circumstances caused his fall. Speaking at one time on the subject of backsliding, “My dear brother,” said he to me, in his loving and affectionate way of speaking, “You need not tell me any thing about it, for I know every hook and corner of it.” When in this state, his family then growing up deplorably wild and wicked, Brother A**** G****d, a youth, was sent to the circuit, a very zealous, indefatigable young minister, whose labours were much blessed on the circuit, when the Lord made him an instrument of reclaiming the old gentleman and several of his family connexions. The old gentleman came boldly out into the cause, took up his saddle bags, and travelled ever since; and the best of all, his eldest son the Newmarket d——l, and sometimes “The lion of the forest,” as he was called, was also taken, and is at this time the dear old father’s presiding elder! Marvellous, indeed, are the ways of the Lord! Oh could our dear brother Smith have looked forward from 1799 or 1800 only about eight or nine years,

how he would have rejoiced ! If he sowed in tears, let him reap with joy.) "The first time I went through Newmarket (in Oct. 1799,) there were only two cabins in the place, but in the spring 1800 many had settled there"—(Hillsborough has now become the county seat of Highland, the county, where there is a delightful society, and the neighbourhood around is famous for religion.)

"We found the distance too great between Scioto and Miami to unite it to the Miami circuit;" (No wonder, for the two streams are near one hundred miles apart, and a wilderness between, and a swamp near twenty miles over!) "So at first I went directly from Hellers' bottom" (about nine miles from Chillicothe on Paint-creek) "to Foster's on Eagle-creek, not less than fifty miles" (not short of seventy or eighty miles; I know the ground well) "and intolerable roads; I afterwards preached at Mr. Bryan's on the waters of Eagle-creek and formed a small class; my congregations were large, and I thought my prospect of doing them good promising. I also preached at Mr. Roger's opposite to Cabin creek, on the Ohio. At the three islands or Manchester (in Adam's county) and at Washington, the mouth of Ohio Brush creek I preached, and also at several other places; Indeed I soon had more doors open than I possibly could attend to. The circuit was now formed; I had to ride from two hundred and twenty to three hundred and twenty miles, on a moderate calculation," [very moderate calculation, it could not have been much short of four hundred miles] "and preach about twenty sermons in three weeks, and very encouraging prospects seemed to be opening before me. It was afterwards made a four weeks circuit: (yes, well it might, for it comprises now a part of three or four presiding elders districts) "One thing made very much in favour of forming this circuit, viz: Such a number of the emigrants from many of the old settlements, scattered through every part of the country, who had been in society before, and were now willing to receive us, and glad to entertain us, as well as they could; I came to few neighbourhoods, but I met with some families, with whom I had been acquainted." (Yes, and our dear brother no doubt might have met many spiritual children, which his modesty prevented him from naming, and were he to do as some have done, all *these emigrants* might have been returned as new members.) "But here I must also remark, that many of these whom we hoped would help us, weakened our hands and hindered the progress of Methodism very much. The people moved to this country from various motives. Some fled from the noise, cries and groans of slavery; others to better their situation in life, and some perhaps to enrich themselves and families, or to get into some post of profit or honour. Hence some who were

lively and happy in religion and orderly in their conduct in the different societies from which they had moved, were very different when they came there: The perplexities of selling off property, settling business, the fatigues and trials of moving a family a long distance, the poor accommodations and strange manners of the people, among whom they settled, a privation of many of the means of grace and advantages of Christian society; but principally for the want of an eye singly fixed on God; a watchful spirit, and a diligent use of the means that were always in their power, they lost the spirit of religion, and a great change took place in them. The consequence was frequent disputes arose among themselves, or with their neighbours, and they set but a poor example before them, and gave Methodism a wretched recommendation. The restless, unsettled, avaricious, speculative spirit which prevailed among the people, militated very much against the success of the gospel; withal the people were very much afflicted with fevers, which prevented them from coming to hear the word, and when they came they were dull and stupid, as if they had no souls to be saved."

"It is not an easy task to paint all the difficulties that Methodism had to struggle with in this wilderness, as it might then be termed. I laboured hard, and suffered much, and the Lord gave me a few souls for my hire, and made me the instrument of gathering together those who had been in the society before: My soul often mourned and sometimes rejoiced, that I was worthy to suffer a little in his cause."

THEOPHILUS ARMENIUS.

Mount-Carmel, Illinois, Feb. 23, 1821.

(To be Continued.)

For the Methodist Magazine.

ADDRESS OF BISHOP GEORGE TO THE MANAGERS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

PERMIT me, my brethren, to lay before you, and through you, before the friends of missions generally, the missionary fields where gospel labours may be employed with a fair probability of success, under the direction of Him who has commanded His ministers to preach the gospel to every creature; that is to say, to the Jew and to the Greek, to the barbarian, to the bond and to the free. I am fully confident that the cause of missions cannot be successfully opposed, inasmuch as the great Founder of Christianity, our holy Redeemer, has given us such an example in his own individual labours, and the success of those whom He selected and appointed, while He was upon

earth, to succeed Him in the great work of evangelizing the world. To aid them in this glorious undertaking He gave them His benediction, and distinct directions, commanding them to perpetuate the system, according to the pattern He had set them. We may, indeed, clearly discover in the life and labours of Jesus and of His disciples, that their grand object was to promote peace, holiness, and happiness through the world.

We do not intend, brethren, to patronize missionaries whose object is to seek comfortable livings ; and when found, by some unaccountable contrivance, extinguish the flame of missionary ardour, and quietly rest in peace and plenty. This is not our object. It is to enlist men into the cause of missions who are willing to devote their all to the salvation of their fellow men, "to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ." Neither do we intend to apply your donations to make your missionaries gentlemen, by raising them to affluence, and affording them an opportunity to live in ease and luxury. We hope to employ men, who will not only report that many parts of our country are a moral wilderness, but who shall assiduously labour to convert the moral wildernesses into a fruitful field. Our intention is to apply your donations to support and comfort labourers who are now employed, or who may be hereafter employed, in carrying the gospel of peace to the destitute inhabitants of our vast frontier settlements, from the river St. Croix, in the Maine, to St. Mary's in East-Florida, and through the western territories bordering on the United States. In this vast circle of more than three thousand miles, including the Indian Tribes who have their residence in the neighbourhood of the White settlements, are thousands and tens of thousands, who are dependent on missionary labours for the gospel of the grace of God. And permit me to say, dear brethren, that we now have many labourers who are serving these destitute hundreds and thousands, who are scarcely furnished with the comforts of life, but who, after the example of that great and good man the Rev. John Wesley, are willing to lodge on boards, or on the ground, and to live on the coarsest diet ; to swim creeks and rivers, if they can but win souls to Christ, and join with them in singing praises to Jesus in their humble cabins. These cabins, indeed, are often honoured with the presence of God, while filled with penitent mourners, and thankful pious Christians.

But these hardy veterans of the cross, who are submitting to these privations, and making such great sacrifices, are often destitute of decent raiment to cover them from the inclement blasts of winter, or to shelter them from the chilling rains of spring and autumn. We state it as a fact, that we often meet, in these frontier settlements, with these real missionaries, destitute of the comforts of life, not having even those garments which

decency and decorum require. We would have supplied their wants, but we had not the means. This deficiency, your society is designed to supply.

I conclude by saying, that those who exert themselves to send the glad tidings of salvation to these children of the forest, the Indians, to their destitute brethren on the frontiers of our country, by supplying the wants of such laborious missionaries as have been described, who are travelling by day and night to promote the honour of their divine master, and the happiness of his redeemed creatures, will undoubtedly meet with the blessing of God in this world, and, if faithful in the discharge of other Christian duties, shall not fail of life everlasting life. To all such we say, your charity, by the help of our good and gracious God, shall not be misapplied, but shall be expended to comfort those who are needy, to whom Jesus has directed His gospel to be preached. May the great Head of the Church bless you with holiness on earth, and eternal happiness in heaven.

ENOCH GEORGE.

New-York, May 26, 1821.

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

Of the New-York Female Missionary Society, Auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

THE silent lapse of time, whose ceaseless current has borne many of our fellow-beings to the grave, has presented us with another opportunity to commemorate the establishment of the "*New-York Female Missionary Society.*"

On this interesting occasion the Board of Managers beg leave to congratulate the members and friends of this Institution, that the same merciful Providence, under whose auspices we were first associated in this labour of love, has kindly continued to us the means of usefulness.

None of our number have been taken from us by death; and though the causes to which we alluded in our last Annual Report, viz. the depression of business, and consequent pecuniary embarrassments, have still operated to lessen our resources, we have been enabled to collect the sum of \$122 which we present to the parent Institution, with our warm hopes and fervent prayers that the design for which it is given may be answered in the conversion of many immortal souls.

During the year now ended, we have received considerable accessions to our numbers, and are happy to state that an increasing interest seems to have been excited in the prosperity of the Society.

We are now called upon to make an important alteration in our *title*, in compliance with the alterations made by the general conference in the Constitution of the parent Society.

The general conference have thought proper to limit the operations of the parent Society exclusively to Missionary purposes, leaving the distribution of the Holy Scriptures to those effective Institutions which are organized expressly for that purpose. This we cordially approve, and consider a happy presage of future prosperity.

While we were recognized as a Bible Society, we experienced no little embarrassment, in the scruples of many who were already members of other Bibles Societies: and some of these have repeatedly declared their willingness to associate with us for purposes solely missionary.

This objection to our Constitution being now removed, we are encouraged to look for the co-operation of our sisters who have hitherto withheld their support from motives which we cordially respect.

A retrospect of the past year affords much matter of thankfulness, in view of the increasing prosperity, stability, and usefulness of the parent Institution.

Among its numerous auxiliary streams, we note, with peculiar pleasure, a Female Association at Albany, similar to this; and another at Boston, embracing the same object: and we must not neglect to mention the zeal and liberality of a few pious females, in a remote circuit in *Maine*, who contributed twenty dollars, to make their preacher, the Rev. Oliver Beale, a member of the parent Society for life.

When we compare our means, in this commercial city, with those of the scattered inhabitants of a country circuit, we at once recognize the principle upon which our Saviour predicated his approbation of the widow who cast her two mites into the treasury. We have given of *our abundance*, but they have contributed of their poverty. May such examples stimulate us to increased exertions, and may we enter upon the duties of another year with a realising sense of our responsibility!

Our labours have been bestowed in much weakness—but *in the arm of Jehovah is everlasting strength.*

The cause is the Lord's, the means also are in his hands; and while we rely solely on His providential interposition, we cannot adopt a better axiom than "to do our duty, and submit the result."

Thus acting, we may enjoy the blessed anticipation, in our individual as in our official capacity, that *all things shall work together for good to those who love God*, and in singleness of heart pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

By Order of the Board of Managers.

New-York, April 4, 1821.

C. M. THAYER, SECRETARY.

THE NEW-YORK CONFERENCE.

THIS Conference held its last annual session in the city of Troy, from May 30th to June 6th inclusive. There were present about eighty-five preachers, members of the Conference; and the business was conducted with great order and regularity, much peace and brotherly love, under the presidency of Rev. Enoch George, one of the Superintendents.

There were thirteen preachers admitted as probationaries into the itinerating ministry; *four* were received into full membership, elected and ordained Deacons, and *three* were elected to the office and ordained Elders. Two received a location, and one was expelled.

The number of members, returned within the bounds of the Conference is,

	Whites.	Coloured.
	23153.	504
Number last year,	22055.	1392
Increase	1098.	Dec. 888.

Obituary.

DEATH OF STEPHEN BASS.

To the Editor of the Methodist Magazine.

DEAR BROTHER,

THE following sketch of the life and death of brother Stephen Bass, I think worthy of a place in one of the numbers of the Magazine. If your opinion accords with mine, you will please insert it.

LEWIS MYERS.

May 12, 1821.

STEPHEN BASS was born in Marion house was a home for the ministers of district, state of South-Carolina, June the gospel for between twenty and 8, 1795, of respectable parents. Their thirty years. Under the tuition of re-

ligious parents, Stephen received a Christian education, and he was the subject of many prayers, both of his parents, and the ministers of Christ. About the sixteenth year of his age, he gave evidence, after having sought the Lord, of his conversion, and immediately joined himself to the Church, of which he became a zealous member. In 1816, he began to speak for God in public, and his word was attended with divine power.

In 1819, under the superintendency of Rev. Joseph Travis, he left his affectionate mother, and many other endeared relatives, and entered upon the labours of a circuit. In 1820 he was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher, and was stationed on Orangeburgh circuit, South-Carolina. His talents as a preacher were no more than ordinary, but his piety and zeal have been seldom surpassed. When not engaged in public duties, he gave himself to reading, meditation, and prayer. The Bible was his constant companion.

His colleague in the ministry, Rev. A. Turner, thus writes concerning him. "He was much beloved by those among whom he laboured, and was very useful, preaching with success in those places where the rest of us could do apparently nothing. One soul pro-

fessed to find peace under his first sermon in the circuit, as did several under his subsequent labours."

On the 27th of August he was seized with a violent bilious fever, which obliged him to desist from his ministerial work. His last text was, "Prepare to meet thy God." He spoke as if he anticipated a speedy departure out of this world, told his audience he was going to glory, and charged them to prepare to meet him there. Before he concluded his strength failed him, but he held on to the pulpit, and spoke like a man overwhelmed with a view of eternity, until he was quite exhausted. Having thus delivered his last message, he was taken from the pulpit, and carried to brother J. G. Stoudermires', where he was treated with great attention and kindness. On Monday, the violence of his disease brought on, at times, a delirium; but even then his constant theme was religion, his preaching appointments, and the work of God. In this frame of mind he expired on Wednesday, Sept. 6th about 8 o'clock, A. M. So he lived, and so he died. He was a good man, a holy, pious Christian, and a useful preacher; his death was triumphant, and I doubt not but his spirit rests with God in glory.

Poetry.

From the Religious Intelligencer.

OLD AGE.

SAY, what wilt thou do when thy form is bent,
When the warm stream that thrills at thy heart
is spent?
When thy hand is powerless, the sunk eye dim,
And pain shall palsy the withering limb?
When the thin hoary locks from thy chill temples fall,
And music and joy on thy senses shall pall?
When the stiffening tongue, and the tremulous sigh
Must whisper the sound of the faint reply;
When the buried friend, and the child remov'd,
And the green sod cover the breast belov'd,
And the alter'd looks of an unknown race
Watching thy slow deceitful pace,
And younger dates on the church yard stone,
Shall chide thy long stay here alone.

Ah! how shall thy bosom then cope with despair,
If the love of a Saviour be absent there?
Go! entreat him to save for his Mercy's sake;
Go! secure thy prop ere thy last shall break:
To doubt is but madness, when *He* is the theme;
To linger is folly, when life is a dream.
Oh! haste to God's temple; go knock* at his door,
Breathe out the warm prayer ere thou breathe no more;
Then launch thy frail bark on the cold stormy wave,
And quietly rest in the night of the grave.

* "Unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened."